



INSTRUCT-O-GRAM

THE HANDS-ON TRAINING GUIDE FOR THE FIRE INSTRUCTOR

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FIREFIGHTING STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Task

The instructor will deliver the basic concepts of firefighting strategy and tactics. The focus of this drill is to allow the student to develop an understanding of just what strategy is and how it is to be implemented on the fireground.

Introduction

The student should have a basic understanding of their role in the fire department, and the role they are to play during firefighting operations. In order to better participate in the fireground operation, the student should have an understanding of what strategy is and how they fit in to the scheme.

Class Outline

1. A discussion of the concept of strategy
2. The definition of what fireground strategy is
3. A discussion of the elements of strategy
4. A discussion of the concept of tactics
5. A discussion of Incident Command options and their impact upon strategy and tactics
6. A discussion of the attack modes
7. A discussion of how to select incident attack modes

Performance Objectives

Our review of the **National Fire Protection Association Standard 1021, Standard for Professional Fire Officers Qualifications** makes absolutely not reference to the actual conduct of firefighting operations. They make great mention of how to manage a fire, how to establish command, how to transfer command and etc. However, they make no reference to a need for developing those necessary skills to conduct a firefighting operation.

Presentation Outline

The Concept of Strategy

Strategy involves the development of a basic plan to deal with a situation in an efficient manner. You cannot effectively combat a fire unless you have a systematic, planned approach to coping with the incident.

What constitutes a fireground strategy?

The questions that determine how you will create your strategic plan revolve around three basic questions:

- ◆ Who is needed to perform the fireground operation?
- ◆ What are they supposed to do?
- ◆ Where on the fireground will they be required to do the necessary tasks?

What are the elements of a fireground strategy?

- ◆ **Who** is needed to perform the work?
The who involves your firefighting staff.
- ◆ **What** are they supposed to do?
The what issues involves the tasks that they will be required to perform
- ◆ **Where** on the fireground will these tasks be performed?
The where issues involve the placement of those members of the department who will operate at the incident within the confines of the fire scene.

What are Tactics?

Tactics are the actual firefighting methods used by individuals, or groups of individuals, to achieve the strategic goals of the Incident Commander. It is only through the proper use of fire department tactical skills that the Incident Commander is able to accomplish the goals that they establish for their plan.

The tactical function that form the operation are:

- ◆ Rescue endangered lives.
- ◆ Protect exposures.
- ◆ Confine the fire to the smallest area possible.
- ◆ Extinguish the fire.
- ◆ Ventilate to save lives, and make a safer working environment for the firefighters.
- ◆ Overhaul to fully extinguish the fire and find the point of origin.
- ◆ Conduct salvage operations to limit damage to the fire building and contents.

What are the Incident Command Options?

There are two basic options that the Incident Commander can utilize on the fireground.

- ◆ The IC can pursue an aggressive interior firefighting attack on the seat of the fire.
- ◆ The IC can pursue an exterior firefighting operation in an attempt to limit the spread of fire to surrounding structures.

The choice of either option dictates how the fire will be fought. In the first instance, the IC must constantly monitor the safety of the personnel involved through the command structure in place at the incident. In the second instance, the IC pursues an exterior attack in order to confine the fire to the structure or area of smallest size.

What are the Keys to Selecting Your Incident Command Options?

There are three questions that you can ask to help you decide which of the attack modes to use:

- ◆ How much fire am I trying to control at this time?
- ◆ How many fire personnel and resources are available to combat the fire at this time?
 - u Are lives endangered which can be rescued by the resources on location with a minimal risk to responding personnel?
- ◆ What level of additional staffing and apparatus can I muster quickly?

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Student Reference

Firefighting Strategy and Tactics – An Eight-Step Method, Harry R. Carter, Ph.D.

Fire Protection Publications, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, 1998

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